(b) if so, what action has been taken so far by Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Coal had intimated to the Government of Bihar that Coal India Limited have no objection to the following nine mines/patches in the command area of Central Coalfields Limited being leased out of Bihar State Mineral Development Corporation (BSMDC), an undertaking of Government of Bihar:—

(i) Jagaldaga
(ii) Jainti Central
(iii) Jainti Khas
(iv) Jainti Jain
(v) Villards
(vi) Villards (P) Ltd I
(vii) Villards (P) Ltd II
(viii) Belgara
(ix) Sedampur

The lease of Jagaldaga mine has been surrendered to Government of Bihar on 17.6.99 whereas the leases of Jainti Central and Jainti Khas mines were surrendered on 26.6.2000. Prior approval of the Central Government of grant of mining lease under Section 5(1) of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 has been conveyed in respect of Villards mine also. Necessary action as per the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 in respect of the remaining mines/patches is yet to be taken by the BSMDC.

(c) Does not arise in view of the answer of part (b) of the question.

Accident in Coal Mines

315. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of accidents which took place in various coal mines in the country during the last three years, coal mine-wise;

(b) the details of the persons killed and injured in the said incidents;

(c) the details of amount provided as compensation to the affected persons and their families; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) to (c) The number of fatal accidents which took place in the coal mines of Coal India Limited in the last three years, the names of persons killed and the amount of compensation provided to the dependents of the victims are given in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix 190, Annexure No. 4].

(d) Coal India Limited is taking the following preventive measures for reduction of accidents:

1. Implementation of the statutory rules and regulations.

2. Monitoring the status of safety in mines by the local management, the internal safety organisation (ISO) of the companies as well as by the ISO of CIL; by Workmen's representatives like Workmen's Inspectors; the Safety Committee at the mine level; the Tripartite Committees at the Company level and Trade Union Members of the CIL Safety Board and the Standing Committee on Safety in Coal Mines in addition to inspections by the Directorate General of Mines Safety under the Ministry of Labour.

3. Regular review of safety at the monthly meeting of CMDs.

4. Conducting safety audits by external experts and implementation of the recommendations of the same.

5. Conducting periodic safety drives.

6. By Training and retraining of workmen and supervisors.

7. By Technological improvement to reduce exposure of workmen to mining hazards as given below:

(i) More than 80% of the coal production is done from opencast mines by modern, sophisticated and capital intensive Heavy Earth Moving Machinery, where the mining hazards are less.

(ii) Design of system of support of roof in the development workings in underground mines by scientific support systems based on Rock-Mass-Rating Studies.

(iii) In underground mines progressive use of steel support to ultimately phase out timber support, wherever possibe.

(iv) Greater use of quick-setting cement capsule grouted roof bolts for support in development workings in underground mines.

(v) Reduced exposure of workers to mining hazards by increasing use of SDLs and LHDs for loading operations in below ground mines.

(vi) Continued efforts towards induction of capital intensive mechanised longwall mining with powered support, where workmen work under skin-to-skin steel roof support in underground mines.

Inefficiency in R & D Wing of Ordnance Units

316. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Research and Development Wing of the Ordnance units of the country is very poor and out of date;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to inefficient R & D of Ordnance units country had to import vital ammunitions at a very heavy cost during the period from 1992-1993 to 1997-98; and

(c) if so, whether Government are taking adequate steps to clear this bottleneck without any further delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) to (c) The Research & Development (R & D) in the sphere of defence systems, new generation of arms and ammunition and equipment is primarily the responsibility of Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), under the Department of Defence Research in the Ministry of Defence.

The R & D activity of Ordnance factories is restricted to product and process improvement only. As such the question of import of ammunition due to failure of R & D activities of ordnance factories does not arise. Imports do take place to meet enhanced requirements of the Armed Forces of items in existing product line or because of induction into service of new generation arms and equipment not developed indigenously.

Design Deficiency in SU-30 MK Aircraft

†317. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to make an enquiry to find out the reasons for deteriorating combat capabilities of country's fighter aircrafts.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.